



NEWS

From County Supervisor Paul Biane

www.sbcounty.gov/Biane

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Lytle Creek CERT Volunteer Saves Teen

A Lytle Creek man, who volunteered for Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training, used the skills he learned in the program to help rescue a 17-year-old girl after she fell nearly 10 feet into Lytle Creek and broke her ankle.

Lytle Creek is the first unincorporated community in the San Bernardino Valley to participate in the CERT program, which is designed to train everyday people to assist others in disasters and other emergency situations.

Bob Vienna, a 59-year-old drywall contractor, was driving on Lytle Creek Road near Green Mountain Road on Feb. 26 when a frantic mother waved him down

and told him her daughter had fallen from a concrete wall into the wash. The girl's father had pulled his daughter partially from the water, but a previous back injury prevented him from pulling the semi-conscious girl completely out of the frigid creek.

Vienna pulled the teen from the water and quickly realized she was suffering from shock and hypothermia. Just two days earlier, San Bernardino County Fire Department Battalion Chief Barry Fox had trained Vienna and other Lytle Creek CERT volunteers how to treat people suffering from shock and other emergency medical conditions.

"Everything that he taught us just came alive," Vienna said.

Vienna asked the girl's mother to gather blankets to wrap the victim in and instructed the father to elevate his daughter's legs to increase blood flow to the girl's essential organs.

Meanwhile, Vienna noticed the girl had fractured her ankle, so he asked bystanders to find something to immobilize her leg. They returned with rope and a car floor mat, which Vienna used as a splint to secure the girl's ankle.

When San Bernardino County Fire Department Captain Brett Marshall and his crew arrived on the scene, the girl had become more responsive and was beginning to feel warmth return to her body.

"Bob should be commended for his quick response in rescuing the young girl," Marshall said.

"His quick actions may have saved the girl's life."

Second District Supervisor Paul Biane, who asked the Fire Department to initiate the CERT program in Lytle Creek, commended Vienna for using his skills to assist the injured teen.

"Mr. Vienna is a perfect example of how CERT training works," Biane said. "It's all about people helping people. Mr. Vienna and other members of the Lytle Creek CERT are trained and ready to provide emergency aid whenever they are needed. That's the kind of community involvement that will save lives."

Lytle Creek CERT members completed their training on March 4, and the Fire Department is planning a second class to train more residents in the canyon community. In addition, the Fire Department plans to initiate other CERTs in unincorporated areas throughout the county.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency began promoting the CERT concept in 1994. The program was modeled after one begun by the Los Angeles City Fire Department following the Whittier Narrows earthquake in 1987. The federal

government increased funding for local CERT programs and began to promote the concept throughout the county following the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001.

San Bernardino County residents can call the Fire Department's Office of Emergency Services at (909) 356-3998 for more information about local CERT programs, or they can view information online at www.sbcfire.org/oes/csc_cert.asp.

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